

SUMMER 2005

Report to 21st District

*Serving Edmonds, Mukilteo and portions
of Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace*



State Representative Mary Helen Roberts
SERVING THE 21ST DISTRICT



STATE
REPRESENTATIVE
Mary Helen Roberts

21ST
LEGISLATIVE
DISTRICT

PO Box 40600
341 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

(360) 786-7950

Toll-free Hotline:
1-800-562-6000

TTY-TDD
(hearing impaired):
1-800-635-9993

roberts.maryhelen@leg.wa.gov

WEB: [http://hdc.leg.wa.gov/
members/roberts/](http://hdc.leg.wa.gov/members/roberts/)

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I hope you are enjoying this glorious summer. When it rains, I worry less about drought problems, and when the sun comes out I am reminded why I love living in Washington!

As a freshman legislator, I found my first session exhilarating. I am proud of both my personal accomplishments and the overall results of the session. Thank you for the privilege of representing you.

During the session, over five hundred bills were passed and signed by the Governor. They ranged from slight adjustments in the law to major policy changes and included three budgets that will fund numerous projects and programs.

The transportation package was one of the most significant steps we took toward improving our transportation network and assuring a healthy economy. I fully supported the transportation package because of the benefits it will bring the 21st District and the state as a whole.

The possible expansion of Paine Field to include commercial airlines is another transportation issue of concern to me and most of you. Please be assured that I will do all in my power to see that the County honors the agreement to "strongly discouraging expansion beyond 1978 levels."

I always enjoy hearing from you. If you are part of a group that would like to discuss legislative issues or wants a speaker, please let me know. I can be reached directly through my district phone – 425-745-9954.

Let's keep in touch..

Sincerely,

Mary Helen Roberts

Winners in the 2005 Legislative Session: Kids

One of the greatest responsibilities of the Legislature and state is to provide education and security for our children. I'm proud to report that significant strides were made in improving children's health and safety, early learning, and schools and colleges.

A BANNER YEAR FOR EDUCATION

We all know our future as a state and communities resides in our children and their education. This year, I supported:

- A record amount of state matching dollars for school construction. Our students shouldn't have to learn in cramped portables and crumbling buildings. Locally, the Mukilteo School District will receive almost \$2.5 million in state funds for an Explorer Middle School construction project.
- Fully funding the voter-approved initiatives to reduce classroom size and grant teachers their first salary increase in four years.
- Opening up 9,950 new enrollment places for students in colleges and universities. We also put money toward new building construction and renovations on our college campuses, including over \$20 million for Edmonds Community College.

EARLY LEARNING: THE BEST START FOR OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN

Children learn a tremendous amount before they even enter kindergarten. In Washington State, there are over 400,000 children between birth and four years old, and many attend some



form of early learning or pre-school, often without any support from the state. I co-sponsored the creation of an early learning council to provide support, standards and vision for early learning programs. The council will also work to make early learning and pre-school more accessible.

CARING FOR KIDS

Health and security concerns make it hard for young people to learn, play and live. I believe in building secure families and providing a safe place for children to grow. This session:

- I sponsored a law to give parents more control and information on video games. It requires retailers to post ratings and give assistance on the video game rating system.
- The Legislature funded health-care coverage for over 38,000 more children, with the goal of covering all kids by 2011.
- I sponsored a bill to work on ways to help children of parents in jail or prison. An incarcerated parent is one of the adverse childhood experiences that often contribute to the need for health care and other services later in life. It's good common sense to ensure that we are not punishing children along with their parents.

Learn more – online!

School report cards, showing academic scores, staff experience and demographics, are available on the web: <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/>

Free online courses are available from the University of Washington. Learn about jazz, genetics, Hamlet and more on your own time and at no cost: <http://onlinelearning.washington.edu>

During bad weather or emergencies, you can learn about school closures, including community colleges, at: www.schoolreport.org Sign up for e-mail or pager alerts for school closures.



HELPING THE PARENTS

Postpartum depression is a much misunderstood and unfortunate part of having a child for many new mothers. I sponsored a bill to help spread the word about parents who face depression after the birth of a child. The Washington Council for Child Abuse and Neglect will receive \$25,000 to begin educating and helping more parents and their children.

Sign up for my E-memo:

Timely updates on topics affecting our communities and state!

<http://hdc.leg.wa.gov/members/roberts/>

Saving Lives and Moving People

THE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

Many people have asked about the transportation budget the Legislature passed this year, and wonder about increases in gas tax and fees. I voted for the transportation package, and here a few reasons why I made that choice.

Safety first. We will replace 27 failing bridges, build more passing lanes and road improvements, give significant funding to cities and counties to fix local roads, and undertake major projects such as replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the 520 floating bridge. I'm especially pleased that \$60 million was included to improve road and pedestrian safety around schools and to access transit.

Transportation improvements are good business.

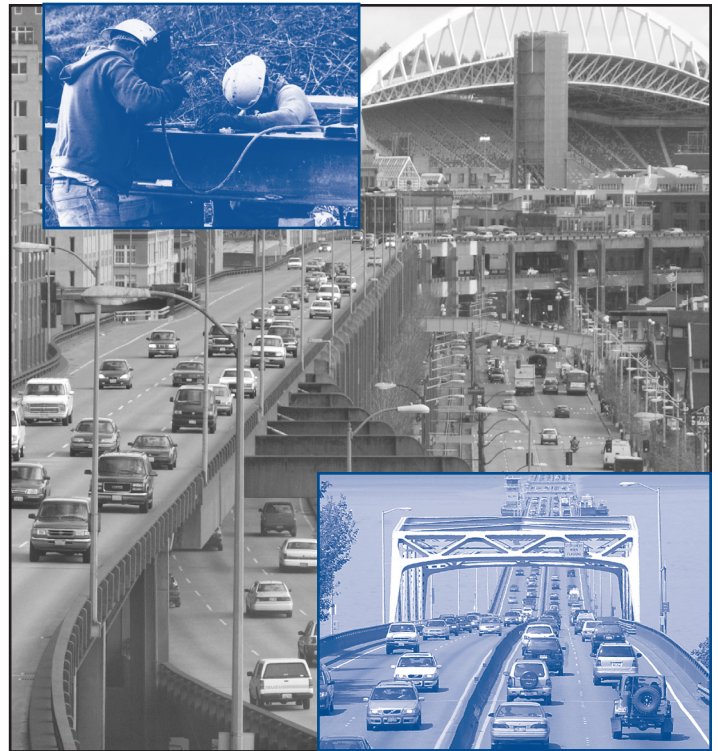
Businesses need to get products to their customers and business leaders continue to urge us to act. The Competitiveness Council wrote, "The most important competitive investment the state of Washington can make is to improve its transportation infrastructure." The construction creates good jobs, as well.

It's truly a statewide plan. The plan pays for more than 200 projects in every corner of the state. In our area, projects include:

- I-5/196th St. (State Route 524) interchange, braided ramp
- I-5/State Route 525 Interchange, new ramp
- State Route 99 (north of Lincoln Way) sidewalks
- Roadside safety improvements on State Routes 11, 525, 900, 169, and 410

Every county and city receives local transportation money. A portion of the new revenue goes to local governments for roads, transit and other transportation fixes. This is the first increase in state gas tax money for local roads and projects since 1991.

In our district, Snohomish County will get over a million dollars more per year starting in 2007, to repave streets, fix dangerous roads, and fill potholes. Our cities receive more money too.



NEW GAS TAX REVENUE FOR LOCAL CITIES (*per year*)

	2006	2007	2010	2014	2018	2022
Edmonds	\$70,702	\$161,390	\$190,055	\$204,576	\$216,922	\$229,146
Everett	\$172,811	\$394,473	\$464,536	\$500,028	\$530,204	\$560,083
Lynnwood	\$61,637	\$140,697	\$165,687	\$178,345	\$189,108	\$199,765
Mukilteo	\$34,298	\$78,292	\$92,197	\$99,241	\$105,231	\$111,161

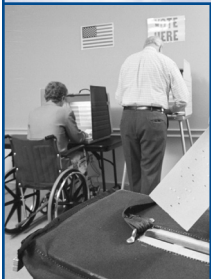
Transportation projects = Jobs

In June 2005 the Washington Alliance for a Competitive Economy, a coalition of business groups, estimated that the 2005 Transportation Act will result in an average 8,800 jobs a year for ten years! In the peak year 2008, the projects will deliver over 14,000 new jobs.

Because the amount of money available to fix our local streets and highways will increase over time, city and county road departments can keep up with maintenance efforts and much-needed improvements.

Transportation means more than just roads. Snohomish County will gain almost \$2.4 million in grants for local transit, mostly for seniors and people with special needs. In addition, the Mukilteo Sounder Station will improve transportation options in our district.

Election Reform



In the 2004 election, problems emerged in the way voters are identified and votes are counted. Because voting is the core of our democracy, we have a duty to protect that right. The Legislature passed several reforms to address the real problems, while protecting the rights of legal voters. These reforms include:

- Requiring standardized procedures for ballot counting in all counties, with regular audits by the Secretary of State.
- Requiring voter identification at all polling places.
- Establishing standards for verification of signatures.
- Requiring provisional ballots to be distinguishable from regular ballots and counted separately.
- Requiring and funding a statewide voter database to frequently update voter rolls, and compare them to deaths, felons, and other lists.

- Making it easier for counties to move to all-mail elections, if they choose.

We are still working on additional election reform issues. **A top priority for me is an earlier primary to help our armed forces and others voting from overseas.**

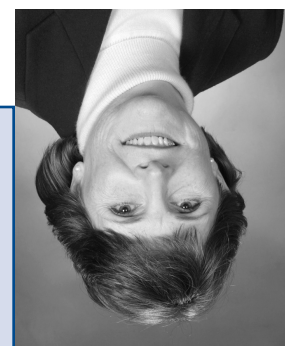
Improving Health Care Access

Health care costs are climbing, putting more and more people at risk and putting businesses into a bind. I supported several measures this year to reduce the cost of health care and make it more accessible.

- Bulk purchasing of prescription drugs, to lower the costs for small businesses, local governments, unions and uninsured citizens
- Affordable medicines from Canada
- Requiring insurance companies to treat mental illness equally as physical ailments, in insurance coverage

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Toll-free Hotline: 1-800-562-6000
(360) 786-7950
TTY-TDD (*hearing impaired*): 1-800-635-9993
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